



The two views of long-abandoned industry at left are of the gold smelter at Balashi (at the upper end of Spanish Lagoon), mentioned in the accompanying article from a magazine published in 1911. Thirty or forty years ago this was probably the busiest place in Aruba; today lizards and cactus have taken it over, and its quiet will never again be broken by the clang of machinery.

E dos vistanan na banda robex ta di e planta di traha oro na Balashi, mencioná den e articulo ariba siguiente página, tumá fo'i un revista publicá na 1911. Trinta of cuarenta aña pasá esaki tawata probablemente e lugá di mas actividad den Aruba; awe'n dia lagadishinan i cadushi a podera di dje i e quietud cu ta reina den e ruinanun nunca mas lo worde interrumpí.

OLD ARUBA

For as long as the Company has carried on operations here, many employees have been interested in the past history of Aruba's gold and phosphate mines, of which the caved-in shafts, crumbling buildings, and rusting machinery can still be found in many parts of the island.

The article that follows, a condensed translation of a piece that appeared in a Dutch magazine in 1911, tells of the gold industry as one traveller saw it near the beginning of this century. No one writing of Aruba after a short visit has ever given a completely accurate account, but the following can undoubtedly be taken as a fair picture of one aspect of "Old Aruba".

The reader is cautioned to remember that, while it is written in the present tense, it goes back over half a century.

It will strike anyone who arrives at Aruba, after having seen the rural districts of Curaçao, that the rural population of Aruba is more prosperous than that of Curaçao. This greater prosperity must be partly ascribed to the intensive aloes cultivation; aloes fields are all over Aruba and provide work for many hands. But the real cause of Aruba's greater welfare lies in the riches of her earth, in the phosphate and gold mines. Anyone can find work with the mining companies throughout the year.

Curaçao does not lack these same resources, for the Santa Barbara mines were producing phosphate during the years 1880 to 1895, but since then they have not been productive.

ARUBA'S GOLD

As early as 1750 a large piece of natural gold was found in Aruba. Another discovery did not occur until 1824. It was first found as alluvial gold in creeks, but soon after was found as primary gold in quartz veins. In this quartz, gold frequently occurs so finely distributed that it is not visible, in other places it is visible as fine sheets and veins in the rocks. Very large pieces of natural gold nuggets were found several times; the largest is stated to have weighed about 25 pounds.

Gold was mined by the Government from 1824 to 1832 and about 100 kilos was found during the first three years. In 1832 gold mining was permitted for anyone interested. In these early days, the raw material from which the gold was separated was put in a barrel, after the larger rocks had been picked out. The barrel was then raised and the contents slowly emptied on a piece of cloth, while the wind blew away the lighter particles. The larger pieces of stone were again picked out, and the remainder treated in the same manner. This method (the description is found in a report by a mining engineer who visited Aruba in 1895) is no longer used.

It never produced a profitable busi-

ness, and in 1854 free mining was prohibited and a 40-year concession granted to a company at the Hague; this was revoked in 1866. In 1867 exploitation was again open to everyone, but late that year a concession was again given, to Francisco Isola, for 35 years at a price of Fls 2,500 per year. This concession was transferred in 1872 for an enormous sum to the Aruba Island Gold Mining company, which failed, and a new concession was granted to a London company, which gave up its rights in 1908.

Then a one-year concession was granted to the Aruba Goud Maatschappij, the first company to succeed in making it a profitable business. With a capital of Fls. 40,000, it made a net profit of Fls 19,000. This company used the "tributer" system. A tributer is a miner who is paid for his work by a percentage on the value of the ore he mines. They are found working all over Aruba from Miralamar to Westpunt.

When the gold content is found to be sufficient, the tributers transport the ores by burros to the mill at Balashi (*see cut*) and flocks of these pack animals are seen on the sunny roads with bags of ore hanging on each side.

The work at the mines is still very primitive. A strong rope and a barrel-shaped iron bucket are used to lower the miner to his place of work; in an inclined shaft the miners creep down on their hands and feet holding on to the rope. Candles are used for light. The tools include picks, sledges, drills, and also dynamite is used.

The men working on the surface sort out the quartz ore. The larger rocks are hammered to small pieces. This is the great art of the tributer's business, to judge from the appearance of the rocks whether or not they should be worked up.

When the ore has been delivered to the mill at Balashi it is crushed and subsequently roasted and then leached in large barrels or tubs with a solution of potassium cyanide. After a few days the potassium cyanide solution is drained off and the contents of the barrel washed with water. With this process the gold goes as gold cyanide and from this solution it is precipitated, then melted together to raw gold in which there is always a percentage of silver. This gold is shipped in raw state.

Note: A coming issue will contain the second portion of the article, describing the phosphate mines (of which the last vestiges can still be seen in Lago's concession) as they were 40 years ago.

Aruba Di Antes.

E articulo cu ta sigui a worde tumá fo'i un revista holandes publicá na año 1911. E ta trata 'riba historia di e minanan di oro i di phosphaat di Aruba, manera un viajero a mira nan mas di 30 año pasá. Arubianonan di e tempo ey lo por recorda hopi di lo que ta aparece den e articulo aki, pero esunnan mas joven por hay'e mes interesante cu e individuonan cu a bini Aruba fo'i otro teranan den último añanan:

"Cualquier hende cu yega Aruba, despues di a bishita e distritonan den interior di Curaçao, lo keda impresioná di mira cu e población campesino di Aruba ta mas prospero cu esun di Curaçao. E prosperidad aki ta mas grandi debido parcialmente na e cultivo di aloë; na Aruba tin terenonan grandi plantá cu aloë, unda hopi hende por haya trabao. Pero e verdadero causa pa tal prosperidad por worde hayá den e riqueza di su tera, den e minanan di phosphaat i di oro. Hende por haya trabao cu e companianan minero durante henter año.

Curaçao tambe tin e riquezanan aki, pues e minanan na Santa Barbara a produci phosphaat durante e añanan 1880 te 1895, pero despues di e tempo ey nan no a worde trahá mas.

ORO DI ARUBA

Na año 1750 un pida oro grandi a worde hayá na Aruba i esey no a worde ripití sino te na 1824. Den di principio e oro tawata worde hayá den e santu di rooinan, pero no a tarda mucho prome cu nan a cumenza haya oro den venanan di piedra duro. Diferente biaha pidanan grandi di oro natural a worde hayá; nan ta bisa cu esun di mas grandi tawata pisa mas o menos 25 liber.

Gobierno a explota minanan di oro fo'i 1824 te 1832 is mas o menos 100 kilo di oro a worde sacá durante e prome tres añanan. Na 1832 explotacion di minanan di oro a worde permiti na cualquier persona interesa. E temponan ey, e piedranan i santu fo'i cual e oro tawata worde sacá, tawata worde poní den un bari, despues cu e piedranan mas grandi a worde tirá un banda. E bari anto tawata worde hizá i e contenido bashá poco-poco ariba un pida paña, i asina biento tawata supla e pidanan mas chiquito, pues menos pisa, tira afó. E piedranan mas grandi tawata worde sacá atrobe, i e resto bashá di nobo den e bari tratá di e mes manera cu anteriormente. E método aki no ta worde usá mas.

Siendo cu e negoshi di minanan no tawata produci ningun ganancia, explotacion liber di minanan di oro a worde pro-

hibí i un concesión pa 40 año a worde duná na un Compania Holandes; e concesión aki a worde anulá na 1866. Na 1867 explotacion di e minanan a worde declará liber atrobe pa tur hende, pero na fin di e año aki, un concesión di 35 año a worde duná na Francisco Isola, kende mester a paga Fls. 2.500 pa año. Na 1872 e concesión aki a worde pasá over na Aruba Island Gold Mining Company cu a paga un suma enorme p'e, pero e compania aki a kibra, i un concesión nobo a worde duná na un Compania di Londen, cual a renuncia su derechonan na 1908.

Despues un concesión pa un año a worde duná na Aruba Goud Maatschappij, e prome compania cu a logra explota e minanan aki cu ganancia. Cu un capital di Fls. 40.000, e a saca un ganancia neto di Fls. 19.000. E compania aki a usa un sistema di pago diferente na esun di e otro companianan; e mineronan tawata worde pagá un tanto por ciento di e valor di e piedranan cu nan tawata saca, di acuerdo cu e cantidad di oro cu e piedranan tawata contene. Nan tawata na trabao over casi henter Aruba, fo'i Miralamar te Westpunt.

Ora nan juzga cu e contenido di oro den e piedranan ta suficiente, e mineronan ta carga e piedranan ariba buricu hiba bai mula na Balashi, i troepanan grandi di e animalnan aki por worde mirá ariba e camindanan di cunucu cu sacunan di piedra colgá na cada banda.

E trabao den e minanan ta ainda masha primitivo. Den minanan cu shaft vertical, un bari di heru, mará na un cabuya duro, ta worde usá pa baha e mineronan na nan lugá di trabao. Ora e shaft ta corre schuins, e trahadornan, wantando na e cabuya, ta gatea ariba man i pia bai abao. Velanan ta worde usá pa lumbrá paden di e minanan.

E hombernan cu ta traha ariba tera ta scoge e piedranan. E piedranan mas grandi ta worde kibrá na pidanan chiquito. E trahadornan aki mester tin bon conocimiento di piedranan di mina pa por juzga fo'i apariencia di e piedranan si ta bal la pena kibra nan of no.

Ora e piedranan worde entregá na Balashi, nan ta worde garná i mulá fini, i despues nan ta worde tratá cu solucionnan químico i awa di un manera complicá, pa e oro worde sacá.

(Nota: Den un otro número nos lo publica e segunda parti di e articulo aki, describiendo e minanan di phosphaat manera nan tawata 30 año pasá.)



ALLEYS

From Page 1

shape last week.

The building will be the first here to have blackout facilities designed and built-in originally, with adequate light-baffles for ventilation.

Except for the concrete foundation and concrete block walls, it will be of practically all salvaged material. The trusses were formerly the roofs of several of the Pressure Stills (but instead of the original sheet rock roofing, which was used for blackout in the Plant, the roof will be of salvaged lumber and roofing paper). Reinforcing rods form the top chord bracing between trusses. Columns, struts, and braces are of salvaged pipe.

The lumber used was salvaged from the old Esso Club and from other recent dismantling jobs. Much of the service piping will be salvage, as will part of the electrical installations.

In spite of its "second-hand" character (the alleys themselves are guaranteed to be absolutely new!) the building is solidly constructed and will look like any pre-war building in which all new material was used.

